

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2562

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, RO

SUBJECT: NEW ROMANIAN PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS

REF: STATE 054396

1. I HAD MY FIRST UNPLEASANT ENCOUNTER WITH THE NEW PROTOCOL RULES AT THE MAY DAY PROGRAM WHEN THE AUDIENCE ROSE TO ITS FEET ALMOST EVERY TIME PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU'S NAME WAS MENTIONED, WHICH WAS NOT INFREQUENTLY.

2. AFTERWARDS, I WAS SPOKEN TO BY CHIEF OF PROTOCOL ANDREI WHO EXPRESSED REGRET AND SURPRISE THAT I HAD NOT RISEN TO MY FEET IN ACCORDANCE WITH NEW PROTOCOL RULES. HE SAID THIS WAS THE LAST SORT OF BEHAVIOR HE EXPECTED FROM SOMEONE LIKE MYSELF WHOM HE KNEW TO HAVE RESPECT FOR ROMANIA. I TOLD HIM I WAS FOLLOWING MY INSTRUCTIONS, AND THAT I DID INDEED HAVE RESPECT FOR ROMANIA. I SAID HOWEVER THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME WHEN I SAW FOR MYSELF WHAT THE NEW RULES REQUIRED AND HAD NOT RAISED QUESTIONS EARLIER BECAUSE I HOPED I COULD FIND A WAY OF OBSERVING BOTH MY OWN INSTRUCTIONS AND THE NEW PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS. I HAD RISEN WHEN THE PRESIDENT HAD ENTERED AND ROSE WHEN HE LEFT. HAD HE SPOKEN, I WOULD ALSO HAVE RISEN WHEN HE WENT TO THE PLATFORM AND WHEN HE RETURNED.

3. ANDREI EXPRESSED PARTICULAR CONCERN OVER MY NOT

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STANDING WHEN SPEAKERS INVITED THE AUDIENCE TO STAND AND

CHEER THE PRESIDENT AND LATER TO CHEER THE ROMANIAN
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC. HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO REPORT MY
BEHAVIOR TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER. I ASKED HIM TO MAKE
CLEAR THAT THIS BEHAVIOR WAS BASED ON INSTRUCTIONS I HAD
FROM WASHINGTON AND WAS IN NO WAY INTENDED TO REFLECT ANY
LACK OF RESPECT ON MY PART TOWARD ROMANIA AND ITS PRESIDENT.
HE SAID HE APPRECIATED THE SPIRIT OF MY STATEMENT. I
CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT IF IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO FIND A
COMPROMISE BETWEEN MY INSTRUCTIONS AND THE NEW RULES,
IT WOULD PROBABLY BE BETTER FOR ME TO BE ABSENT ON
OCCASIONS THAT MIGHT PRODUCE EMBARRASSMENT. COMMENT: AN
INCIDENT WAS BOUND TO COME. WHILE I COULD HAVE STAYED
AWAY AS SOME AMBASSADORS DID I PREFERRED TO TEST THE
SITUATION. WITH REGARD TO THE SPECIFICS CITED BY ANDREI,
THE ONE REGARDING CEAUSESCU I CONSIDERED A MAY DAY SLOGAN
AND THE OTHER WAS LINKED WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF
ROMANIA. BY WAY OF FLAVOR, THE FINAL STANDING OVATION TO
THE SPEECH GIVEN BY POLITICAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER
PANA ALSO INCLUDED "ANTI-IMPERIALISM." I AM IN A VERY SMALL
MINORITY HERE. SINCE I COULD WELL BE CALLED IN BY
MACOVESCU OR ONE OF HIS DEPUTIES, WOULD APPRECIATE
INSTRUCTIONS AUTHORIZING ME TO BE ABSENT FROM ANY
FUTURE EVENTS WHERE I MAY BE PLACED IN SIMILAR SITUATION.
IN THE MEANTIME, I WILL SEE NEXT WEEK WHETHER ON THE
BASIS OF THE MAY 1 EPISODE, I CAN WORK OUT ANY MODUS
VIVENDI.
BARNES

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